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CH2M HILL PLATEAU REMEDIATION COMPANY BEGINS REMOVING NUCLEAR REACTOR BASIN AT HANFORD

Basin removal high priority for protecting Columbia River from contamination

RICHLAND, WASH. – FEB. 3, 2009 – [CH2M HILL Plateau Remediation Company](#) (CH2M HILL), working with the U.S. [Department of Energy](#) (DOE), has begun excavating a contaminated storage basin for nuclear reactor fuel at the [Hanford Site](#) in southeast Washington State.

Workers are demolishing the K East Basin, located approximately 400 yards from the Columbia River, in Hanford's 100 K Area. Removing the basin will give workers access to contaminated soil under the basin later this year.

"Removing the basin is a top priority in our cleanup work along the Columbia River," said Dave Brockman, Manager of the Department of Energy's Richland Operation Office. "We want to get to the contaminated soil under the basin as soon as possible and keep the contamination from moving toward the river."

The 100 K Area contains two retired plutonium production reactors, K East and K West, which operated from the 1950s to the 1970s. Each reactor also has a 125-foot-long, 20-foot-deep basin attached to it for storing uranium fuel rods. The basins and 80 support facilities around the reactors are scheduled for demolition as part of cleanup of the 100 K Area. The DOE is working toward finishing cleanup of hundreds of buildings and waste sites in a 210-square-mile corridor along the river by 2015.

"CH2M HILL is on schedule with the safe removal of the basin," said John Lehew, CHPRC President and Chief Executive Officer. "We're committed to achieving the Department of Energy's vision to reduce the footprint of the Hanford Site, and we're committed to doing it safely."

Workers demolished the K East Basin superstructure – the concrete walls and roof above the basin – in 2008 and began excavating the basin itself in mid-January. CH2M HILL expects to finish the excavation work in July 2009.

The million-gallon, concrete basin once held more than 1,100 tons of uranium metal fuel rods, known as spent nuclear fuel, as well as radioactive sludge, a byproduct of fuel corrosion from years of storage. Water in the basin provided shielding from the highly radioactive materials while they were in storage. Leaks of contaminated water from the basin were recorded in the 1970s and the 1990s.

Workers finished removing the spent fuel from the basin in 2004 and radioactive sludge in 2007. They drained the basin in 2008 and filled it with sand mixed with grout to aid in demolition. The sand not only provides shielding from radioactivity in the basin's concrete

walls but also serves as a platform for the excavation machinery. The substructure that remains below grade consists of contaminated concrete walls and floors.

"This K East Basin has had over 30 years of service in Hanford's plutonium production mission, followed by nearly 20 years of waste storage," said Larry Gadbois, EPA Environmental Scientist. "The basin's useful life is over. Now its final chapter is one of contaminated debris and dirt we need to remove to safe disposal and restore this part of Hanford to safe future uses."

After the basin is removed, CH2M HILL will begin cleaning up contaminated soil under the basin, demolishing surrounding facilities, and placing the K East Reactor in interim safe storage.

Headquartered near Denver, Colo., employee-owned CH2M HILL is a global leader in engineering, procurement, construction, management and operations for government, civil, industrial and energy clients. With \$5.8 billion in revenue and more than 25,000 employees, CH2M HILL is an industry-leading program management, construction management and design firm, as ranked by Engineering News-Record (2008). The firm's work is concentrated in the areas of energy, water, transportation, environmental, nuclear and industrial facilities. The firm has long been recognized as a most-admired company and leading employer, including being named by FORTUNE as one of the 100 Best Companies to Work For and one of America's Most Admired Companies (2008). Visit www.ch2mhill.com.

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